

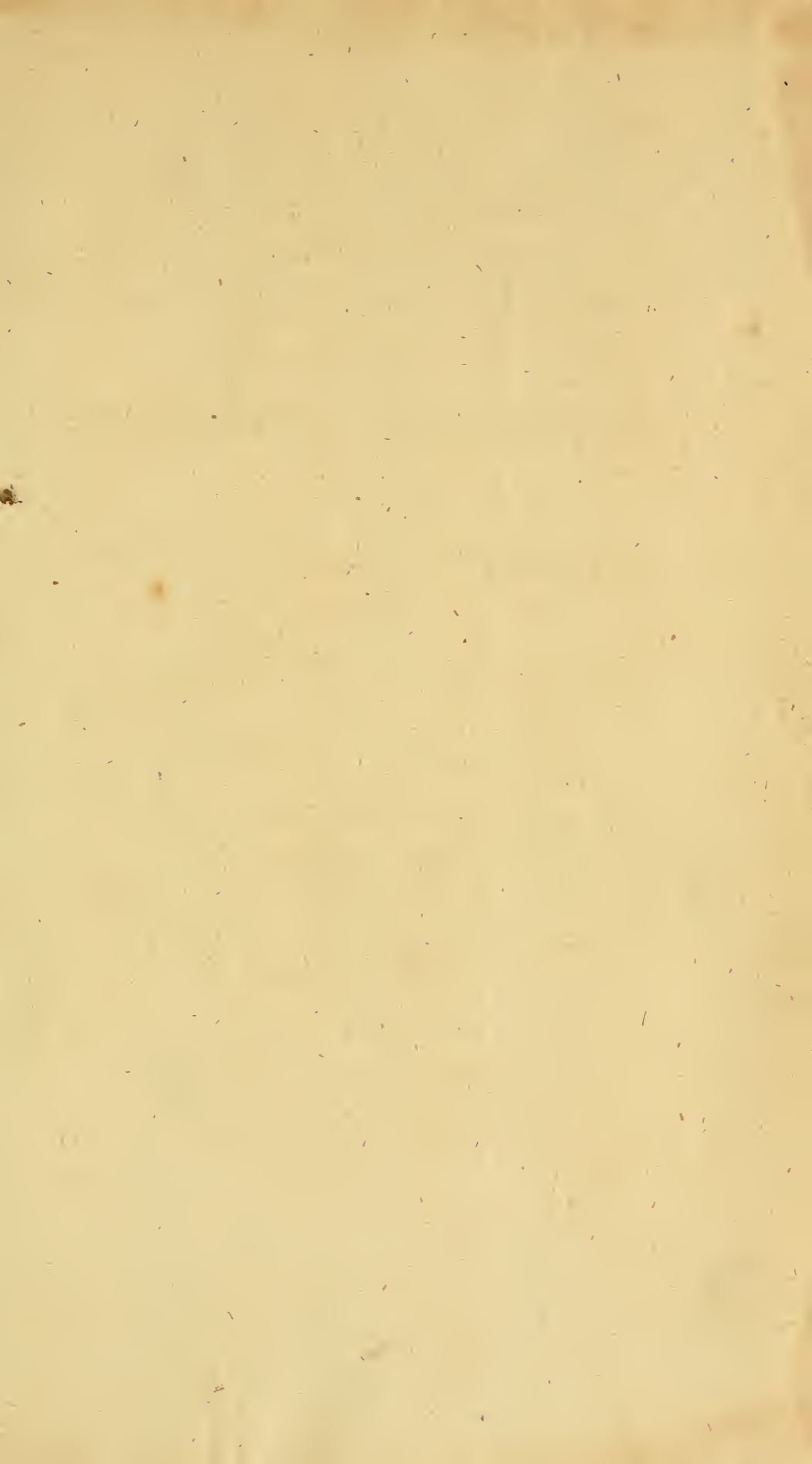
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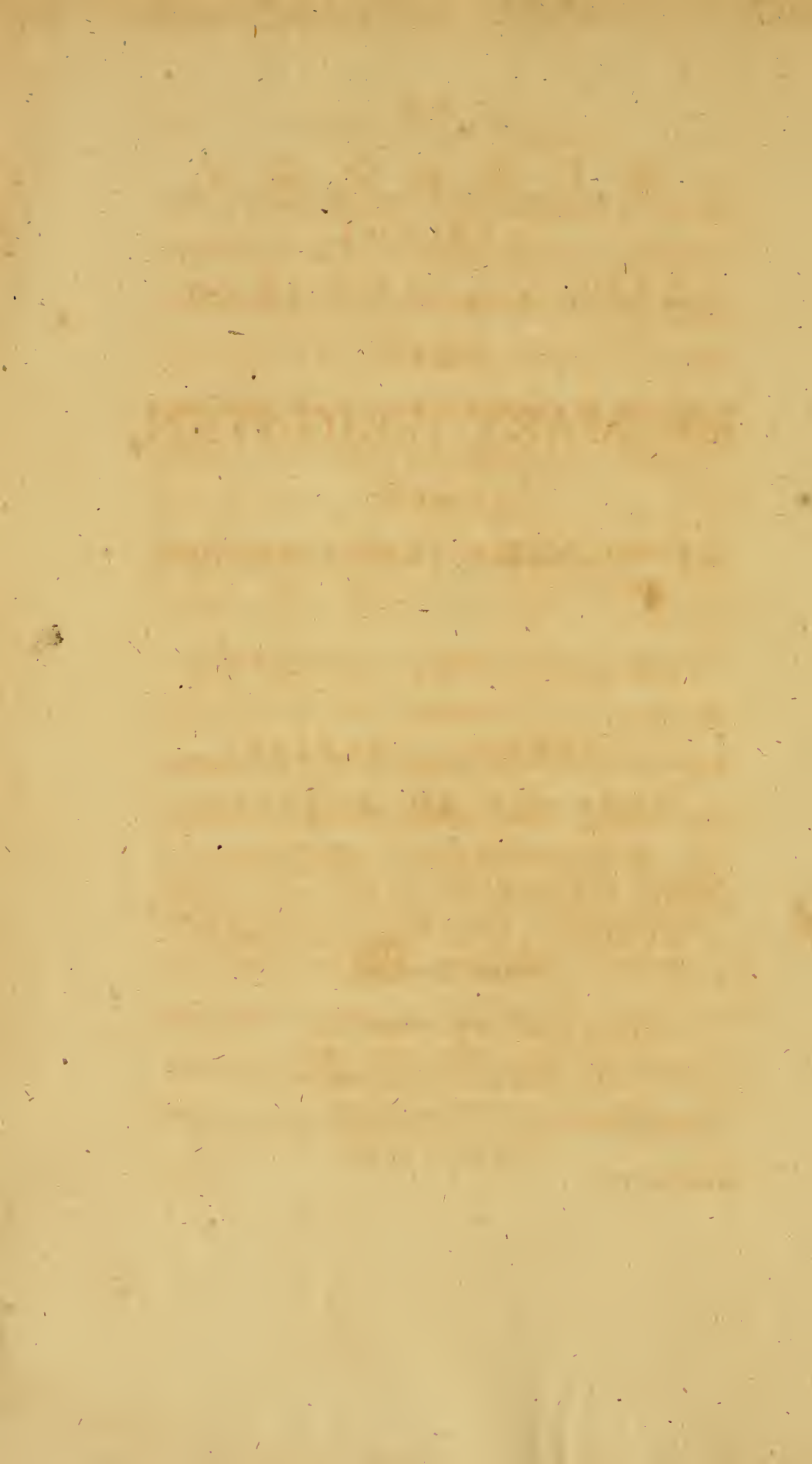
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AN
A P O L O G Y
FOR THE
L I F E A N D C O N D U C T
O F
Mrs. MARY WRIGHTEN,

L A T E
A FAVOURITE ACTRESS AND SINGER,

O F
D R U R Y - L A N E T H E A T R E,
A N D
V A U X H A L L G A R D E N S.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF,
AND DEDICATED TO HER HUSBAND,
JOHN WRIGHTEN of the same Theatre,
In Consequence of his Persecution of her for
several Years past.

If wives do fall, it is their husbands faults,
And have they not affections as men have?
Then let 'em use us well, else let 'em know,
The ills we do, their ills instruct us to.

SHAKES.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR

T. 56
. 156

ALLEN A BROWN
DEC. 17, 1909

DEDICATION.

TO MR. JOHN WRIGHTEN,

THE following apology is very respectfully dedicated. It is due to him as a debt of honour, which must be paid; and Mrs. Wrighten begs his pardon for not discharging it sooner. The delay is not to be attributed to her want of calling it to remembrance; but to a hope that

he would have forgiven it. His demands have been numerous, and the payment is somewhat distressing. The interest she reserves, assured he cannot expect it; although, in point of strict usury, she admits his title to it. If he be not satisfied let him speak out, and he shall have an honest reply. Every thing here designedly omitted, in consideration to *his* feelings, and *her* charity, which covers a multitude of sins, shall then be exposed. His *calibre** is great, and he shall have a candid hearing. He is the natural father of this pamphlet, lawfully begotten on the body of his wife. It has gone its full time, and having extorted it from its mother

* A French word of Mr. Burke's.

by

by a peremptory mandamus, she now lays it affectionately at his feet. If the likeness be good, he will soon discover who sat for the picture, and may see it in his own dressing-glass. Disdaining a descent into low particulars, Mrs. Wrioughten hath clothed her object in a church-going suit. She abounds not in idle anecdote to gratify impertinent curiosity; and defamation flies from her abode. Not any character is mangled by her, nor hath she brought on the stage either male or female under false appearances. This she leaves to those ingrates, those putters together of nothing, who, unfit for the task they set themselves, spare neither man nor woman in the distortion of

their features. Wholly unused to the razor, they chop with a cleaver; and strangers to their subjects, they exhibit the daubs of sign-painters, instead of the works of a Master. They employ themselves for bread, and, destitute of truth or gratitude, they bring themselves to scorn. *Ingratum si dixeris omnia dicis.*

Mrs. Wrioughten has striven to make her apology palatable by giving it an agreeable flavour, and she saves to herself a right of enlarging it as occasion may require. To those, however, who pry into books for secrets be it known, that if they search here for scenes of delicious romance, vicious intrigues, or wanton amours, they will be deceived. Nothing but truth

truth in all the nakedness of beauty is here to be seen. No fiction is called in to catch a greedy attention, or interest the reader in worthless discoveries. No character is convulsed in the drawing*, nor no

* Scandal, like treason, is often sought for as a relish, while the defamer and traitor are punished unpitied. Great minds are superior to the former, and they abhor the latter. In regard to the many silly squibs and libels often scattered against our fellow-creatures, the late Lord Chesterfield very happily expressed himself, in saying, "Let fools admire what fools indite." When we look round the world we find the better the character, the more it is an object for knaves and blockheads to laugh at. But the shafts of abuse are so impotent that their efforts may be compared to a pug-dog shedding its water on a lion. On the contrary, there are others who, like galled horses, wince at every touch of character, and dread it as naughty children do the birchen rod. The
ancients

inflammatory tale is told to poison the passions, or lead them astray. Such as it is, she hopes it will be well received. It is printed with no ungenerous view, no motive of dishonour, or prospect of gain; and having done every thing in her power to make it acceptable to her husband, to whom she wishes no harm; but to whom she recommends the mirror of reflection, she now leaves the victim at the altar, desirous that he may be the priest and make the offering.

ancients dressed up their sacrifices for the altar, and such is the invention of modern calumniators that they give a good name for the sake of defaming it. Thus is scandal a tax that that every one some time pays for being eminent, and those who regard it are as vulgar minded, as those who circulate it; even as a receiver of stolen goods is as bad as the thief.

P R E F A C E

THE ends of this Pamphlet are truth and justice, discussed on moral and philosophical principles.

Had Mr. Wrihten weighed maturely the necessary steps towards attaining mutual happiness he would have acted with wisdom; and have been sensible of the perilous consequences when unbound by obligations, essential on his part to so glorious a purpose. Lust and avarice are generally the two springs that propel a man to marriage. He seldom
dom

dom thinks of any further happiness under this ordination ; which if he truly considered, he would find that his honor, interest and peace depended much more on duties belonging to himself than her he has thought proper to constitute his own.

Every man who becomes a husband, naturally desires to live well with his wife ; and in proportion to her honor, understanding, and good nature, the higher will be the joys that flow in upon him from domestic harmony, and a sweet concurrence of sentiment with her to whom he is united. But although this is a blessing which all aim at, it is lamentable to observe how different are the ways of those who pursue it. Lust or
avarice

avarice favors the deception and holds close the mask. Conscious of their own infincerity, great allowances ought to be made by them and the world, for those Fair one's who have bended under its influence; more especially so, as it is univerfally known that between man and woman the former is not the least difsembler of the two. If fuch men preferved inviolate the characters after marriage which before they had affumed, they would have little to bewail: but to gratify a fleeting or a fordid paffion, which perishes with the hour, they involve themfelves in the fnares of remorse, and become fenfible that where the beaft has been nothing is left worthy the relifh of a man. On
this

this side the grave perfection is not to be found. Nothing therefore should be looked for by mankind that is out of Nature; but they should reciprocally forgive each others infirmities, while they endeavour to correct their own.

What degree of affection can a woman long retain for a man, who having treated her with the most fawning submissions, while her lover or rather sutor, affects to be her master, the moment she entitles him to the name of husband? when instead of being humoured and indulged, she discovers that she is looked upon little better than a servant?

Such a sad reverse of behaviour to her will alarm her love, and awaken her
her

her pride ; which may totally extinguish every favorable impressiion he had made on her mind.

A wife who discharges the duties of her place wants not any remonstrance. If ignorant or perverse she will never be amended by austerity. Resistance will take place, and the silken ties of affection in time be done away, while tenderness and compassion, with the soft whispers of kind advice, will make a generous open hearted woman exert every nerve to improve and please her husband, who however morose and unyielding, may thus be made flexible and obliging. A haughty superstitious behaviour from a man whom nothing pleases in a wife, leads to great danger.

danger. It renders the good less worthy, and infallibly makes the bad much worse.

Mrs. Wrioughten speaks in this manner from experience. If her husband had acted by her as she submits he ought to have done, she would never have left him but in death. The blissful union of hearts dissolved; discord and confusion prevailed between them; and far as she is now from him, she feels a due concern for his subversion of the best ends of marriage—namely to make life glide smoothly on; to soften a husband's care, to protect the weakness of a wife; to preserve unmelted the cement of friendship, and every thing else

else that heaven can bestow on mortal beings.

Since: she quitted her husband, of which her readers will find more hereafter, she has heard much of her name, which hath been mentioned with no unexpected variety of sound. She remembers to have heard of a Cock-lane ghost, which excited the attention of the curious, and was afterwards succeeded by a Stockwell wonder. Crim con. and adultery have now shut the eyes of superstitious inquirers, and the flight of a woman from her husband, works on the mind of the public nearly as much as a murder or a rape.

False tales are things of quick growth: Set the smallest seed of them
and

and it will soon burst forth in vigorous branches. This Mrs. Wrihten knows in regard to herself, and to defeat them is one of her inducements to plead for herself. If she be successful, her readers will rejoice with her. If not, she trusts in their forgiveness, and will never do so any more.

A N
A P O L O G Y

FOR

M R S. M A R Y W R I G H T E N.

C H A P. I.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

TH E life of an individual is so uninteresting to the public,* that it would be a blameable piece of intrusion to lay it before readers of discernment without the offer of an apology. Theatrical characters, though denominated public, may possibly of all others be deemed less worthy the appellation. A Mountebank and his trumpeter ;

* Yet such is the force of indiscretion or vanity, that accounts are published of the *lives* of worthy men *before* their deaths. If without their knowledge, the authors pay them little compliment. If with it, we cannot but smile.

B

a merry

a merry Andrew and a puppet ; are public personages ; and as, like the former, they are generally spoken of by the voice of candor, censure and criticism, independant of their domestic conduct, an attempt to rescue a persecuted object from wandering obliquy abroad, and to open a *bulletin* of female miseries at home, may not be unworthy of public attention. In private the task of communicating distressing truths may be easy and alleviating, though otherwise ineffectual. In public, however well intended, it may nevertheless meet with secret reprehension.

To friends and acquaintances Mrs. Wrihten hath opened her mind as little as can well be conceived by an injured woman; and she is now constrained, she hopes with becoming reluctance, to make her case publickly known. Yet as injury, distress
and

and misery pervade, more or less, the dwellings of all human beings, whatever be their stations, nothing but an honest motive to manifest circumstances of private ingratitude for public inspection, can justify an actress and singer in rushing forward with an historical sketch of her conduct from her infancy to the present time.

In every bosom, fortified as it may be by philosophy, reason or religion, there may be found some lurking pang, and those who hear another's woe may at least commiserate, if not appease it. Perfect happiness* is
not

* No plenitude of present gratification can make the possessors happy for a continuance, unless they have something in reserve, something to look for. This is seen in the spirits of those who are engaged in interesting pursuits, compared to the dejection of those who are born to so much that they want nothing, or have used their satisfaction too soon. This carries the rich and great to the horse course and

not attainable. It may be viewed at a distance by the eye of imagination, but in the approach we discover a monster or a phantom.

Difficult is the effort to make smooth the asperities of a rough-roaded life, or to avoid the open or hidden shafts of slander; and as it is the worst of slavery to govern our conduct by the opinions and whispers, the surmises or menaces of others, so is it wise to make self-approbation, regardless of the busy hum of men, strike the string of joy.

Of those who cannot defy attempts to disturb their peace; but who droop under what possibly does them honor, it may be said they are unsuited to this world. By sighing and lamenting they complet

the gaming table; and often engages them in contests of which the success bears no proportion to the solicitude and expence.

work

work of those who hate them; but to glance a smile of indifference over the envy and ill will of others proves an enlarged mind; and revenges them severely; leaving a creature as a thing to laugh at, who spits its spite on those it cannot reach.

Well may it be said, that a contented mind is a continual feast; and this ought never to be forgotten or obscured by the vain hope of possessing unceasing bliss. A persevering satisfaction within, gives but a faint idea of true happiness; and this is to be found only in those who are blessed with spirits to bear and forbear, to give and forgive, to improve every little gleam of intermitting joy, and lighten the weight of misfortune. The all-wise Author of nature hath left it in every one's power to enjoy different sorts of fancied bliss, and notwithstanding the supposed inequalities of com-

forts here below, all, except the conscious guilty, have proportionate shares ; yet all magnify their own afflictions, unknowing the load that bears down the heads of others ; unknowing too that the soft hand of time, with submissive obedience to human events, will at last administer relief to the bleeding wound. Those who sink under trifles are weak indeed. They fight against themselves with self-created weapons, while others with unruffled souls, like Patience on a monument, can smile at grief, and weather the storms of distress. Under the meridian warmth of a cloudless temper, virtue, piety and benevolence will dispel a large mist of earthly misery, and like Elysian flowers flourish and triumph even in the neighbourhood of noxious weeds.

With a portion of spirits and such a
temper

temper therefore, much to be boasted of but known only to a few, Mrs. Wrighten, sensible to the truth of these sentiments, hath long borne up against the stream of domestic ill treatment. She hath never aggravated what she could not remedy. But pressed by the spur of the occasion after a trial of more than twenty years, when she found it impossible longer to oppose the mildness of resignation to the boisterous and flinty behaviour of her husband, she resolved by a kind of over-ruling necessity to make a public appeal to that impartial tribunal which is able either to condemn with mercy or excuse with charity. Whatever be the consequence her rejoicing will be the testimony of her conscience.* Tenacious of doing no harm; careful of and

* For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience. 2 Cor. v. 12.

affectionate towards her innocent daughters, and properly fearful of just censure, she has studied with humility to submit much in little. *Multum in parvo componere studui;* and by stiffling all the grosser particles of her compound anguish, to put down its author by a round unvarnished tale.

CHAP-

C H A P. II.

B I O G R A P H I C A L.

IF it be any credit to descend immediately from poor but honest parents, who while they labor to live also labor to do right, Mrs. Wrighten hath a claim to it superior to those of higher birth; or what is more commonly called family rank, whose ideas of personal dignity are less respectful to virtue than those of the vulgar. No merit can be derived from our progenitors. In narrow minds the high sounding name of a title, a pedigree, or an ancient ancestry, intoxicates the ideas, and hurries them into pride that brings down scorn and contempt; while

while the scions of an ordinary house laugh at the destitution of so ridiculous a bauble.

The truest mark of honor is virtue, which as it is its own reward, so likewise is it superior to every other terrene distinction. To emulate her in a monarchy like our own is sure to be attended with the best of effects; while an unlimited power of creating gaudy ranks of men will serve but to foment private envy and public disrespect, even from those commoners who, as in queen Anne's time, rejected a bill from the Lords for confining the peerage to a definite number. The real post of honor is a private station, where virtue feeds on itself, and thrives by exertion. Titled characters may wisely form a barrier between the crown and the people, as in Great Britain. So long too as they keep within their due bounds, and encroach not on
either

either, they may be called publicly virtuous. But when, as in a neighbouring country, honors are prostituted to the destruction of that equality of rights which is inherent in the very nature of man, leaving in civil society only two ranks of human beings, the great and the little, as if the latter were born only for the former, the heart of goodness must swell with delight at hearing of their downfall.

To begin our biography. Mrs. Wroughten is the daughter of a working jeweller—a man ever justly esteemed for the simplicity of his manners, the integrity of his life, and his ingenuity as an artist. While a girl, from ten years of age unto her marriage, she was generally known about the neighbourhood of her birth place by the style and title of the sprightly Polly Mathews. Her mother, a woman rather violent in her
dif-

disposition, to defeat the wants of many children and add to the earnings of her husband, kept a huckster's shop in that part of Hoxton called the Land of Promise; but whether it were a second Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, is somewhat to be doubted. The neighbourhood of it was mean, and the inhabitants generally poor;—here Mrs. Wrighten was born, and received the humble education of mere reading and writing, until the age of about twelve or fourteen years. As she saw little at home to attract her attention amidst the crying of children, the scolding of her parents, and the ordinary avocations to which they were doomed, she sought her amusements with her playmates abroad. She was scarcely ever domesticated but at her meals and hours of rest. This soured the tempers of her father and mother; and such
were

were the personal severities she received from them that she determined to quit their dominion in the Land of Promise, and search out a Pisgah from whence she might see it in reality. They had often mortified her by their idle, though perhaps affectionate suspicions, that her acquaintance with some young man in their vicinity had absolutely gone too far, and they resented it by repeated castigations. This growing insufferable she took her departure from their house, unknowing in particular whence to fly for refuge and protection.

Ill guided parents! Passion on one hand, and folly on the other, floated them down the rough tide of fury, and want of reflection raised their unbridled hands against a daughter they loved, merely because they thought her guilty of what the laws of nature might excuse, and which no corporal

cor-

correction could take away. Had reason or religion been at hand they would have mildly remonstrated on a child's incaution, and, on recollecting the language of the Judge Supreme, have said to her, "Go thou and sin no more." Had these exalted assistants been present they would have known that in forcing a young and giddy creature from their house for an imaginary transgression, and withholding the succouring hand of kindness, they must become the cause of every condition to which she might be afterwards devoted, and of course find *her* wretchedness placed at the doors of *their* consciences. But as every evil hath its attendant good, Mrs. Wrighten in her flight was not lost. Her succeeding welfare in one sense may be attributed to the inconsiderate rashness of her father and mother. Undeserving of their wrath, and
innocent

innocent of their charge, she found an asylum in the house of an aunt or a grandmother. Here she met with that tender attention to which at home she had long been a stranger; and having a very sweet musical voice, she inclined her thoughts to the science of singing. A master was considered of to cultivate her taste, and prepare her for public exhibition. Mr. Griffes an organist now came in the way, and to him Polly Mathews was soon after apprenticed.

In the first two or three years of her pupillage she gave strong proofs of excellence, and that she would shortly become an ornament to the stage. Before the expiration of her articles she was introduced to Mr. Garrick, who engaged her for his theatre. Her debut gained her great applause, which continued to increase in proportion

portion to her experience. Frequently mixing with all sorts of performers from the lamplighter up to king Garrick—the barber to the machinist—the worst of of bad players to the prompter—it may well be supposed that offers of marriage would flow in abundantly upon her from every understrapper of the stage, who counted on the pleasing society of a lively good tempered young woman, but above all the profits of her profession. And now stood forward, the redoubted Mr. Wrighten. He had some discernment, was plausible, and inclined to be theatrically useful. The facetious Polly Mathews was caught by his pretences. She gave him more credit for whom and what he was, than she too soon found he deserved. She hoped to secure something like a promise of satisfaction, and married him in consequence; but in signing

ing the black contract, as many ill directed women had done before her, she sealed a warrant for her living death.

Here reflection on this common transaction is inevitable; and it shall have the next chapter intirely to itself.

CHAP. III.

OF MARRIAGES.

HOW many valuable women have been doomed to misery and want, disease and death, by untimely marriages? because the respective parties have spoken to, and looked at each other in a mask; and showed themselves the reverse of what they truly are. The passiveness of innocence and inexperience on one side, with the action of art, dissimulation, and treachery on the other, too often sacrifice at the altar, where faithless vows are made in the face of heaven, fit only to escape the lips of fiends in hell. If a woman commit herself to this improper sacrifice

sacrifice with sincerity, looking only to the assured joys and comforts of wedlock with a man she does not downright hate, many may be her excuses. By his goodness and kindness superadded to her own deserts he may influence her friendship, if not her love; and the idea, if not the reality of happiness, may be known between them; but where separate views of partial interest and convenience prevail, where each solicit the suffrage of the other in disguise, little else can be expected than hatred, disgust or at least indifference.

If marriage be a dictate of nature or an institute of Providence, surely it must be because nature to answer her own important purposes calls for the junction of the sexes, and the nurture, care and protection of their offspring. Thus indeed may its formalities be deemed holy, since

all the principles of nature are so, or we arraign the wisdom of Providence and condemn the ways of God to man. In no other light can it be viewed, and though the church hath arrogated a power to call it holy, not exclusively in the engagement, but in its interference through all its hostile consequences, such is the wisdom of our temporal laws that they treat it only as a civil contract. Well then might it be if it were entered into by a civil mode. In such a case, one of the sacraments would never be profaned; the altar would be uncorrupted by unmeaning protestations, and sacred writ be spared the office of solemnizing vows to impious or unprepared parties, who like those that receive the tokens of the Eucharist without a firm resolution to lead a new and virtuous life, receive little short of their own condemnation.

To

To enter into a state wherein the whimsy-formed angels of the earth soon prove to be mortals, and love itself, however inspired hath for its object only flesh and blood, by an ecclesiastical form, may agree with those serious well intentioned parties who are able to give and take for better and for worse, and make allowances for human failings; but considering the imbecillity of mankind, their mutual deceptions, the fluctuation of their likings and dislikings, and their short sightedness, it may, without the smallest apprehension of reproach be thought that a contract in itself no more than human and legally civil should never be made in a church. The same good effects in regard to the parties, their children, and the designation of their property, would be secured to them; and thence an absolutely civil institution, instead of a holy one, would do honor

to our community. The bible would no longer be made the test of truth, but perjury and falsehood would meet the due of their crimes with more satisfaction.

At all events, and although misery, the lot of all, is often known in marriage, it must be allowed, that it is not as an inevitable effect; but rather from those failings of humanity, those external circumstances that affect, the happiness of a single life. A man or woman who cannot be pleased with any thing, who hath a mind unbent to the common accidents of earthly intercourse, is almost as unfit for existence as a married state. But if the parties have kindred souls, very rarely known, they may verify the poet's * words, and render bliss secure. Desirous of improving their happiness they will look be-

* Thompson in his Seasons.

yond the speckled shell of human things and make marriage the spring but not the grave of love. Well attempered minds is beauty in all her shapes, and thus understood flies abashed from the approaches of passion, where allurements are calculated to betray without honor to protect. With those whom sympathy attracts, it almost leaves the coarser tie of human laws unthought of

“ Unnatural oft and foreign to the mind,”

while love, excited by symmetry of form, is transient, and, like a shadow, vanishes in the embrace. A noble Author hath said that peace or wretchedness in marriage arises from cohabitation. This is true. Love ever and anon hastens from the sight of human formalities ; and violated or ill requited, will turn itself to hate. In such a situation senseless indifference cannot be found. Patience may endure much ; but a series of ill

returns for good, will ultimately, like the constant dropping of water on a stone, wear out meek submission, and make the sufferer, like Mrs. Wrighten, give way to calamity; then seek relief at the expence of reputation, with all the ill founded surmises of a babbling world.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

REFLECTIONS ON MRS. WRIGHTEN'S
MARRIAGE.

THE marriage of Mrs. Wrighten being established by a holy form, she presently found herself exposed to a numerous offspring, for whom no other provision was made than what must be drawn from her profession; and she, reflected on the chains of bondage she had heedlessly forged for herself. She conceived she was more blameable in her own mind than if she had waited for time to influence her natural inclination in a state of freedom. In the former she was convinced a woman might in vain protest or remonstrate, when power abused had broken the links of affection, and she was
dragged

dragged to the embraces of lordly appetite, to perpetuate her misery, in violation of the tenderest feelings of her sex and the sacred rights of Nature. In the latter had she renounced virginity without interrupting the ends of providence, she could have resumed her consequence, and done justice to herself if her paramour had proved ungrateful, or she found it no longer expedient to gratify herself or him.

Unfortunate is the woman who wants resolution to sacrifice a real though temporary happiness, to the certain though lasting miseries which the pride or prejudice of her friends would kindly provide for her. If she does not rebel against the laws of nature nor venerate Chastity* as a Deity, it is because she sees them daily trampled on and legally foresworn at the foot of Hymen's

* Chastity is not the test of virtue; nor is every virtuous woman chaste.

altar;

altar ; it is because she knows that love is to be the chief business of her life, and that good sense will enable her to prefer to false friends and a perfidious world the tender regard, the winning assiduities of him whose virtues captivate her heart, whose love subdues her pride ; and by raising a mutual flame becomes the only object of her wishes. The conscious purity of her soul and the innocence of her life will repel the pointless shafts of slander. Unbound to the performance of duties which her generous heart disclaims, the freedom of her will gives lustre to her choice in spite of the severity of female reflections ; while that shameless creature who from mercenary or ambitious views, receives to her arms the man she dislikes, if not despises*, will glory in her

* For naught avails the specious name of Wife,
A maid so wedded is a W—— for life.

LYTTELTON.

guilt !

guilt ! Can this be called honorable while abhorrent nature groans under the foul oppression, and insulted modesty indignant calls on Infamy to vindicate her wrongs* ? No. The painful conflict between love and shame, the crimson blush shall save our country women from reproach, while tomorrow's bride in vain shall call on marriage Rights to sanctify her joys ; rank lust has bought them at the expence of gold and terrene honor ; deceitful joys that leave wide room for sorrow and remorse †.

* Whene'er disgusted sense the joy disowns,
Nature beneath the soul oppression groans ;
'Tis then a virtue to desert that bed
To which in virgin charms the bride was led.

† Souvenez vous toujours que meme dans le mariage le plaisir n'est legitime que quand le desir est partagé.

ROUSSEAU.

C H A P-

C H A P. V.

BIOGRAPHICAL RESUMED.

MRS. WRIGHTEN, now a married woman, encreased her public fame and enlarged her profits. She became a Mother likewise by him, she rather chose to make kind to her by her sedulous attention to his interest, than to teaze by her disapprobation of his frequent incivilities. He had prophaned by marriage vows before he knew her, and one of her first discoveries was, that the funeral of his departed wife, whom he had deserted with two children was paid for from the profits of his living one *.

* Mrs. Penchard her Mother is witness to this fact.

Surrounded

Surrounded afterwards by a family—her mind bent towards her business in the Theatre, and interrupted in it by the moroseness of Mr. Wrihten, whose every disposition was ungenial with her own, she was more than fully employed in providing for the first, attending to the second, and softening the last. A wedded life of six or seven years made her sensible that she had better not have married at all ; or that if the society of a man were necessary to her happiness, or useful in her situation, better would have been that she had met the protection of a Gentleman and a man of honor and humanity, who would have smooth'd her time by his endearments, and gratefully have treated her for benefits received. But she had now a combination of causes to lament her fate, and she strove to comfort herself under it by the cheering hope of sometime seeing a pleasing change.

As

As it was not in her power to recall her marriage vow or undo her civil contract, stamped by a falsely called holy ceremony, she stifled the remembrance of it to prevent the pain of reflection; and knowing that she had the authority of scripture to entitle her to a divorce, the uncertain, the expensive, the difficult road that our laws, both spiritual and temporal, have marked out whereby to attain it, compelled her for a time to make the worse appear the better. As a Mother, her natural affection attached her to well disposed children. As a wife, she suffered what she could not alter, and while as premised she considered marriages at large productive of more evil than good, more anguish of heart, than any thing like domestic harmony; she was lothingly acquainted with the truth that marriages are never made in heaven; and that those only are right which are entered into in the cool medium of reason,

under

under the freedom of the will, where nothing but love can answer love, and rises superior to all the bindings of superstitious and crafty ceremonies.

Although Mrs. Wrihten had not any personal beauty to attract, every one who had seen and heard her in public or private, admitted her to be an affable and entertaining woman. It was always her study to please. This from the earliest period of her marriage, which took place soon after she was of age, has been by her husband her greatest crime. In her, good humour and pleasantry were always unfriendly to haughty fullness in him. Wedlock indeed may have made them one flesh, according to an ancient and trite maxim ; but Nature had made them two distinct persons in the qualities of their minds. Discord and discontent were his guardian harpies, while conscious

scious satisfaction was ever in company with her. Yet he was gloomy and offensive, notwithstanding in hurling herself away with him she had nothing to gain by it but every thing to loose. He at the same time had every thing to procure from it, and nothing to be deprived of. She had a handsome salary, and he as an inferior performer had scarce any salary at all. A bad of all bad husbands he lived upon her earnings, and perpetually mortified her by his unkindness. Had he possessed a good heart, and been commonly affectionate or distantly civil, she had so far put the keys of heaven in his pocket, that he might have employed them to mutual advantage, and lived happily and respectably with her and her children. He was destitute of the finer feelings of sensibility that vibrate the soul with the most poignant relish, and after frequent and open

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communications with other women he grew jealous of her conduct. Like Envy, he gnashed his teeth at her, and growled the more, as he found less to growl at. Scarce a man young or old that came to her dwelling, even while surrounded by young children, but he suspected, and the intervals of this self-tormenting passion, which in him was fordid in the extreme, were only while he was with her in those companies to which he was led by his views of interest on the approach of his benefits. On this occasion he was all things unto all men. He smiled and smiled again. He was a Dissenter of every description among Dissenters, a Papist among Roman Catholics, a Jew among Israelites, a Churchman or a non con. as best quadrated with his peculiar advantage. This also made him pine and supplicate, fawn and flatter as a lover, and
with

with crocodilean moaning, delude Mrs. Wrighten into his unhallowed hands.

A continuation of deceptive coarse and vicious behaviour, which delicacy forbids particularizing, imbittered her private hours and made his company intolerable. His conversation would have disgraced a bordel. His manners were gross and filthy. His looks hideous, and altogether he was at last successful in making himself the sole object of her detestation, until sometime in the year 1786, after bestowing upon her every vulgar name and epithet in his power, which he had repeated, like a bell striking alternately the hours of a clock, he forced her from his house at midnight in Kennington-lane. It was with the most painful reluctance she was thus hurled from her daughters, on whose dear account she had submitted for years to the mal-feasance of their Father.

Thus placed in the open street at the dead of night by his outrage, unable to gain admittance to her home, she fled to her Father's at Newington for private refuge.

By this action he executed unto her a bill of divorce, sealed and delivered by his proper hand. According to the law of Moses laid down in the pentateuch, if a man put away his wife from his house when she finds no favour in his eyes, he shall write her a bill of divorce and she may be wife to another; and as this wise legislator tells us that the end of the law is obedience, Mrs. Wrighten, from the moment of her departure out of Mr. Wrighten's house, felt herself discharged of every obligation to him; yes, even divorced from him by his own act and deed. It is true the text from Moses speaks of uncleanness, which St. Mathew construes into fornication, as a reason why a man shall thus
put

put away his wife. If he have it not he will be unjustified, and cause her to commit adultery. This uncleanness which in Hebrew means matter of nakedness, or according to the Evangelist, fornication, must precede the putting away as a reason or as a positive fact. It must not float as an idle suspicion in a groveling mind: it must be established on the broad basis of undoubted truth, or the putting away a wife by her husband, is a transgression of the law of God, and she may enforce restitution of conjugal rites. But wounded by this additional stab, this putting out of her house without uncleanness, Mrs. Wrighten conceived it a release, a receipt in full, and of all demands from the beginning of the world to the day of the date, and the end of time. He had thrown her away, and abandoned her, as one who casts his treasure on the face of the

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earth,

earth, leaves it for the finder to possess as the lawful occupant.

It may be asked why Mr. Wrioughten cast away from him this *treasure trouve** at a midnight hour, and called her servants to witness the transaction; and it may be thought by all those who know not the fact, that nothing but the highest of provocations, an amalgamation of actual uncleanness, fornication, and adultery, with a tincture of every crime of human invention on her part, would induce him to the commission of it. The truth is, those corroding suspicions he had long harboured of her infidelity were now blown into full blaze. Like every maliciously jealous man by a woman he abuses, he rather suffered them to dwell with him as a viper than generously chase them up to a needle's point. Fearful

* A law term, meaning treasure found.

of proving their cruelty and injustice, or pursuing her at every turn to detection which would annihilate them, he cultivated and cherished them. Unmindful of his own uncleanness he made them the cause of her expulsion. She had gone home from her business at the Theatre in a Hackney coach. Her Chariot she had ordered to be put up because the evening was rainy, and she choose not that her horses should be exposed to the inclemency of the weather. This was her grand crime which in the fowl map of his imagination stood out like a promontory in the tempestuous sea of his suspicions. Her house was converted into a criminal court; her husband was her accuser; her servants were her jury; himself sat as Judge, and lastly he filled the honorable office of her executioner. The sentence

of this arbitrary President being compleated, and the poor criminal driven to the house of her father for shelter, he received her with kindness. The heart of this venerable hoary headed Sire wept blood at every pore. He had long sympathized in the woes of his daughter. He struggled to conceal his grief, until it burst out in an ebullition of tears. His next conflict of mind was on what to do for her. His house was at her service, and she herself would have disregarded the wretch who had forced her there, ay even have rejoiced at her liberation from the worse than common side of his prison, had she not left behind her three unoffending daughters. These she wanted with her. She sent for them. She presented their unhappy Father with the olive branch, *Pacifereque manu ramum pretendit olivæ,**

* Virgil.

and

and offered for their sakes to provide for them and give up to him half her income. He indignantly refused the whole. What could she do? Let us enquire in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

BIOGRAPHICAL CONTINUED.

OH ye virtuous fair, take Mrs. Wrighten under your soft protection. Let her ask you whether after the unjust and unmerited abandonment of a merciless husband, which possibly was a favour he for the first time obligingly conferred on her, she should have attempted a return to his regions, which were next to infernal; or make the best of her condition with her father, whose open hand of compassion offered assistance to place her in the enamelled mead's of Peace's bright domain; where in all the calms of conscience she could enjoy that satisfaction

un-

undisturbed by a husband's baseness, which all the world beside could not bestow? Those only who feel the ills they describe can best give an answer, while cold apathy by a warm fire may draw out, "She would do well to go home to her children. It is shocking to desert them." So it is. "Their father's anger must soon abate, and no doubt he would receive her with a relenting heart." Not so indeed. He had made this home horrid to her. Her children were dear to her, and she offered to provide for them; but his adamant heart was inclined to distress her. She hence avoided the misery she had for years undergone with him, in the hope that any terms of separation would be preferable to her living longer with a man who delighted in tormenting her. These, like her betters, she looked for in contempt of that antiquated

quated

quoted but common practice among married people to be found in their seeming fondness to aggravate each other, yet live together in spite. This may be a proof that man and wife are one flesh that cannot be divided. But Mrs. Wrighten who, like her betters also, knew too well what it was to regret the bondage she had subscribed to, was of a different opinion. To her a man and his wife had always appeared distinctly two persons in a myriad of characters, and nothing under heaven could consolidate them into one, but a persevering union, a perpetual summer of congenial hearts. In this she was supported by the noble law of man, which daily puts asunder those whom the devil had joined together, to answer his own wicked purposes. Had God condescended to interfere in their junction, man dared not presume to break it, because
every

every thing immediately out of his almighty hands is good and right. Under his benign influence therefore Mrs. Wrighten determined on a life of separation, as a distinct person from her husband.

While every overture was playing to the serious opera of bringing him to equitable terms, which, consistent with his character, he shrunk from, it was unknown to most of her acquaintance whether she were living. The hollow trump of rumour made her at one time desperate enough to destroy herself; at another, it put her under the protection of the Duke of Norfolk. Then it sent her abroad, and at last found her safely retreated with Mr. Pownal, at his house in Southwark. He was proprietor of an extensive manufactory there, and was but little known to her husband. He had been serviceable to him as a friend, and was now
marked

marked out as an enemy. He was a single man, and a housekeeper of reputation. He was affable, hospitable, friendly and benevolent. She acknowledges with pleasure many civilities she received from him, and deserted as at this time she was, unknowing where to turn for safety, accident brought him acquainted with her refuge at her father's, and of her husband's turning her from his house. Here, at her own request, he paid her a friendly visit, and offered her any just assistance in his power. He advised conciliatory measures, but Mr. Wrihten was hardened. He had not a tear for pity, nor a hand open to charity. He would not hear, and conceiving Mr. Pownal to be her favourite, every thing on his part to appease disquiet and pave her way back to his house, aggravated his outrage and enflamed his vengeance. He hired persons to watch her in
her

her walks. He planted them in lodgings near her father and her friends. In vain was his search. She was retired, and to her he was lost. She avoided him as a pest and determined to go abroad, to change her name, and chase him from her mind until he lost his head in oblivion.

At this time her aged father was aggrandized into an object of his indignation. He was suspected to be the banker and trustee of his daughter. She was thought to have made up a handsome purse at her husband's expence, and that she had placed it in the hands of this good old man. Mr. Wrihten courageously took him by the collar and dragged him into chancery, where he charged him with the fact and called for discovery. It was honestly denied, the bill dismissed, and the complainant paid costs to the defendant. Mrs. Wrihten still out of
his

his reach, he extended his arm to her friend. He flattered himself he had ample evidence, and he brought an action for damages. This gentleman being publicly spoken of and charged with concealing her in his house, advertised in the newspapers a declaration of the contrary. She admits that on the launch of a balloon in the grounds of his manufactory she visited him to see so novel an exhibition; but most solemnly denies she ever was concealed in his house. Concealed she certainly was, and it was in the only proper place, the house of her father.

Served with this action for damages by Mr, Wrihten, Mr.Pownall, who is respected by all who know him, felt some concern that in return for what he deemed an act of friendship, he should be involved in a law-suit; and knowing it could have nothing but malice for its foundation, he prepared for his
defence.

defence. Mr. Wrighten began to reflect on what he had done. He had driven a wife from him, and cast her on the wide world as *treasure trouve*. He had divided his home-stall, and deprived himself of the profits of his better self. His receipts were lessened six or seven hundred pounds a year. He was left with two daughters, and the pangs of remorse now touched him with anxious wishes for the return of their mother. She whom he had abandoned and thrown away he now claimed. The property he had renounced he asserted a right to, as if he had lost it by accident, and discovered it in the hands of the finder. Self only was the selfish consideration, and self only directed her to flee from him as to another Zoar.

He pursued his action, and his complaint was this,—that Mr. Pownal had taken and carried her away; known her criminally,

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assaulted

assaulted and imprisoned her, broken and entered his house, and ridden in his chariot.

To charges so ridiculous and absurd the plea of not guilty was given, and the parties being at issue, Mr. Wrihten was dared by all the boldness of irresistible truth to proceed to trial.

To the first charge, that Mr. Pownal had taken and carried her away, she confesses that he waited upon her at her house in Kennington-Lane some time in 1786. It was in the middle of the day. Her servants and children were present, and in consequence of a general invitation from Mr. Wrihten himself. His visit was short, for Mr. Wrihten was not at home, and he took his leave.

To the charge of assaulting and imprisoning her, she confesses too, that she once took the liberty, with many other persons,

to

to go on his grounds to gratify her curiosity in the ascent of a balloon. This was all. She was not taken away or detained by him. She was at full liberty to act as she pleased, and she was never assaulted by him.

To the charge of entering Mr. Wrighten's chariot, nothing can be said, but that Mr. Pownal, having for some time been indisposed by illness, availed himself of an opportunity to sleep in the air at the house of his brother in the Vauxhall road; and walking on a certain morning in the neighbourhood, he casually met Mrs. Wrighten in carriage. Being very near her house, she stopped and alighted to ask him how he did. She walked with him a few steps, when in the instant he was about wishing her a good morning Mr. Wrighten met them. "What, " madam," he said to her, "I have now

“discovered you.” “You have, indeed,” she made answer, “in the open road just “entering the door of my house.” Mr. Pownal, alarmed that Mr. Wrihten had not spoken to him, walked back to his brother’s, and thus seeing the sparks of jealousy, did not call on either of them again ; but Mr. Wrihten, fearing he had offended him by his rudeness, waited on him at his house, where he left his compliments, with his hopes of seeing him soon after.

To the charge of criminally, knowing Mrs. Wrihten, it is the idle formation of his distorted fancy. There was neither the faint shadow of a proof of it, nor a single circumstance beyond what has been premised, on which the most prying suspicion could fasten. The whole was imaginary, arising from the single fact that Mr. Pownal had casually met his wife and once paid her
a visit

a visit when he happened to be from home ; and that she afterwards called upon him to see a balloon.

With this plain case, superadded to a body of evidence tending to prove Mr. Wrighten's ill behaviour for several years, Mr. Pownal went into court at Guildford in Surry, satisfied that on a trial he should obtain a verdict in his favour. Unfortunately Mr. Justice Heath was taken ill and adjourned the hearing of the cause to a future day.

In the interval Mr. Wrighten, despairing of success, and apprehensive that a public discussion of his conduct in a court of justice might subject him to public derision, hurt his daughters, and injure himself in the theatres, beat up a parley. Mr. Pownal readily listened, and a truce was agreed on. Mr. Wrighten *dropped his suit and paid the costs.* While he piped Mr. Pownal danced,

and *he took back his wife on her own conditions* *. Her daughters hung round her heart, and on their account she made up her mind to return to them rather than him, with whom she *stipulated not to cohabit* †. To them she went from her father's, but sad and pitiful to tell, it was impossible to wash the black moor white, or make the leopard change his skin. In the faint shone forth the demon; compunction was dead and Richard became himself again. Mr. Wrioughten forgot all his penitentials and his promises of amendment. He renewed his former behaviour, and nothing remaining whereby she could possibly find peace, she voluntarily left him.

There are more ways than one to effect a

* This is an unexampled circumstance, and proves that there are husbands capable of any thing.

† An ample proof that all ties of affection were broken between them, and that they would not long live together.

given purpose. He had before expelled her his house by manual violence. He now hurried her from it by making it a hell to her, and she again fled to her father's; again offered terms of separation in his favour, which again and again he rejected. As if devoted to desperation and ruin he spares nothing to attain them. To distress her, he distresses himself. In pursuing her, he picks his own pocket and fails in his attempts. Why else refuse the undeserving boon of the major part of her earnings and deliver up her daughters to her protection? Where is the woman, however great her patience, tame her sensibility, submissive her temper, and cold her feelings, who would stamp the black dye of her unhappiness with a man who had improved her hatred by his dirty manners, his hypocritical pretences, and the impurity of his personal conduct?

Where is the woman who, after twenty years acquaintance with his filthy behaviour, would quietly submit to a continuation with a man who brought disease to her bed, and perfidy and injustice to her home? If there be one it must be one from whom reason, sentiment, and taste, have fled abashed, and in whom melancholy phrenzy only remains.

Mrs. Wrihten knows well she is of little weight in the great scale of humanity. She knows her own and her husbands insignificance, which ought perhaps to have screened him from her notice. They are both human beings, and she in particular may have feelings as exquisitely tender as any lady of the highest rank, who has been like her, injured and deceived by an ungrateful man. If Mrs. Wrihten left her husband of her own free will she is justified within, and looking around she wants not the sanction
of

of exalted characters for what she has done.* As a woman, though a public sinner, she may be commiserated in her misadventure, while he, though low in life, may be sentenced in uplifted minds to condign punishment for his folly and impolicy. She long looked for the charming hour when Conscience would bring him to a sense of his rashness. Callous in his sins he dreams of appropriate rectitude, and after conviction complains of censure. He calls himself injured beyond all men; but no one hears him, and he is enraged. In his story he favors himself, and Mrs. Wrighten is infamous. The truth is not in him, or she would blush at his tale. He has established for a certainty, that how perfect soever is the general system of Nature there exists

* She however disdains all examples; and rests her justification on the foundation of conscience.

one among her imperfect sons in whom centres all the deformities of moral degeneracy. Her warm insulted blood which he had studiously provoked at last recoiled, and wearied out by such an instance of Providence, she found that the farthest she could be from him would best promote her peace. The willingness of her heart to doubt at every turn that he was less unworthy than he was, often betrayed her into the weakness of disputing with his obstinacy. She saw that a sacred ne plus was assigned by divine justice beyond which he could not proceed. This was her departure from his house and supremacy. Where protection was wanting, allegiance was destroyed, and where there is no fealty, there is no rebellion. In abdicating his government and abhorring his usurpation, she has not taken arms against him. She was wounded by him to the
bottom

bottom of her heart and self-released from his domination, she hath sued for peace with him by every means ; but war, war, war is the cry, the dismal knell of him to whom nature with niggard hand has dealt out her endowments, and after many fruitless attempts to obtain it she quitted him FOR EVER*.

Upwards of four years have since elapsed in which she has sought repose in poverty, partly with her Father, partly in retirement at home, and partly abroad. She declares herself highly indebted to Mr. Pownal for his unremitting friendship in her days of want. In the fullest construction of words, Mr. Wrighten is not only the Author of her present situation ; but is the manager, the theatre, and actor in all its parts ; and that the performance might be complete, he hath

* Her daughters were of an age to take care of themselves.

been

been prompter also. Why on the contrary refuse half her earnings, and to deliver up her daughters to her care ; but because he glories in his persecution and derives a pleasure from pain. She hath tendered him to every reasonable extent, and it is in the power of her Father to produce a paper written by himself, wherein he pronounces his own unqualified permission and consent that she is at liberty to *commit adultery Seventy times seven*.* Kind Mr. Wrihten ; but his kindness in this particular was of a local nature. It was confined to mere self ; and the profits were to be exclusively his

* This paper is in the hands of Mr. Mathews. It proves Mr. Wrihten's total disregard for his wife, and that he thirsted only for the profits of her profession.

But, on proof of this written permission to commit adultery, what damages would a most rigid jury give, if the fact were established ? *Damnum absque injuria*.

OWN

own. He cast an anxious eye to seven hundred pounds a year *landed security*. This he called for more than once. Hence the courteous reader can have no difficulty in drawing a just conclusion from premises so hideous. But hurt by her sequestration from all theatrical employ in England, where she was sure he would monopolize her pay, she no longer could sustain a life of inactivity, and resolved to seek an engagement some where. She at length found one in North America, where she hopes and doubts not she will meet with encouragement, and a mansion of peace—

She is now arrived there; but in the hour of her embarkation at Gravesend, Mr. Wrighten thought proper to serve Mr. Pownal with a new action on her account, notwithstanding the non pros. of the former and his payment of cost*. Such an action is

* It is supposed that this action is brought as the
result

manifestly brought for lucre, and (as Mr. Pownal was himself going abroad) in the trust that he could not defend it; and that therefore the malevolent Plaintiff would obtain against the hospitable Defendant a verdict by default.*

Mean mean man!) There are the same grounds on which to follow up this action as the other, namely none at all. Every action must be groundless where there is no proof to support it, and Mr. Wrighten is again

result of a conference between Mr. Wrighten and Mrs. Freeman, Mrs. Wrighten's sister, who hath said he offered her fifty pounds to give evidence against Mr. Pownal, so as to entitle him to heavy damages.

* Mrs. Wrighten would willingly acquit the Attornies concerned in the institution of this suit of any improper views; but nevertheless asks them to what end it was instituted in this manner against a Gentleman whom they knew was going abroad in the very moment, and could not be present in the defence of it?

Wrighten

set at defiance in the production of any. He has darkened the atmosphere about him with rays of supreme contempt, extending from the western shore of the Atlantic ocean to the Hay-market theatre, and they follow him like his shadow wherever he goes; diverging from the minds of Mrs. Wrighten and Mr. Pownal to melt him into nothing.

Of the fate of this tiny second action Mrs. Wrighten's readers and the public will be informed in due season. It will be opposed, and heaven send it a good deliverance *.

* Of all problems in the law, there is not any more difficult of solution than this. In what sense and in what proportion is a man entitled to damages for the adultery of his wife? That this is forbidden by the decalogue is undoubted, but the measure and degree must depend on all the circumstances that induced its commission by the respective parties. A man is entitled to damages from him who has seduced his wife with whom he had ever lived in harmony and

and love. Here they operate as a punishment for a tort of the highest nature. But how far a man who treats his wife ill, and forces her on the world, ought to have damages from him who treats her well, and to whom she flies with affection, must be left to the superior judgment of the reader. Certainly when an action is brought on this subject, it seems obvious that a large sacrifice is made for the sake of damages as the principal object. If they be excessive they ought not to be paid, any more than excessive fines for crimes. The law does not consider crim. con. as a crime, but a civil injury, (and surely none can be greater) for which damages may be recovered; and these may be increased or diminished according to the rank of the parties, their connection, the seduction, and the danger of a spurious offspring which a husband, however, bad, is bound in settlement to provide for. Where the reverse of this is the case, though the tort is the same the action will lie, but damages will be small. Yet after all the offence in general arises in the *wife* whose husband recovers damages of a man for what *she* has done.

CHAPTER VII.

HYPOTHETICAL.

MRS. WRIGHTEN presents her most respectful compliments to her liberal readers, begging the favour to reverse the medal for a moment, by way of hypothesis, and to put the case, that the amiable Mr. WRIGHTEN hath full proof of his *cara sposa's* cohabitation with another, then ask the question, whether *she* be blameable and *he* entitled to damages? The tongue of generous philosophy, the eye of penetrating wisdom that views things as they are in the abstract, their association and consequences, will all concur in proclaiming the negative. Com-

mon charity will excuse a woman, treated and abandoned as Mrs. Wrioughten knows herself to have been, for indulgences which are only criminal in proportion as they involve herself or others in misery or danger; and common sense will determine that no man is entitled to pecuniary * reparation for what he has been the cause of, more especially so, when he has dropt one action, on payment of heavy costs, and taken back to his house the suspected adulteress. Is a woman, after every tye of affection is broken by an abuse of her confidence, the disease of her person and the wringing of her heart, to live a recluse in penury? Is she not to have a friend to sooth her, to associate with and assist her—to chat and read with

* It has been said that there have been husbands who have gladly received the miserable pittance of their wife's prostitution.

her—to sympathize with and even love her, when such a one comes in her way, who commands her own by his goodness to her? Is she, like the stricken deer, to weep in solitude or die by the assaults of the herd? Forbid it heaven, forbid it truth! as well might we strive to change the course of nature, upbraid the work of God, and unite the antipodes. Is a man furthermore to call on a court of solemn justice and an English jury for damages where none have been sustained? Forbid it reason! as well might a reward be expected where there was no merit, and for every arrow planted in the bosom of her he has justly lost.

Far be it from Mrs. Wrighten's intention to justify by the colour of language, vice and infamy, or the aberrations of any of her sex, who may have wantonly swerved from the paths of virtue and duty. Those

who, as married women, living in the very bosom of happiness with good husbands, dishonour and leave them, she judges guilty —yes, as much so as those vilest of all vile men who, nearly after breaking the hearts of good wives, harras them in their retreat, and sue for damages against their friends who succour and perhaps cohabit with them.

Thus viewing the question of guilt or innocence in all its bearings, unforgetful that reason and custom may wisely prescribe laws to nature, Mrs. Wrighten does not plead the cause of all men. Many there are who fly from women that have gratified them at the expence of themselves. These are despicable. The present enquiry extends only to her own sex, who, like her, have been untimely married. She flatters herself that her readers will go along with her in this apology for her conduct, and in their judgment

ment be mindful that they may be judged in their turn *.

Barring the infirmities of human nature, she trusts that in a general account of good and evil, respecting her virtues and her errors, a handsome balance will be found in favour of the former. Conscious of no harm she hath nothing to turn pale at †. Her charity and good-will towards others are not without testimony. Her natural temper for pleasantry and her ready endeavours to oblige, both in public and private, are well known. As a wife, mother, mistress, neighbour and friend, to the utmost of her poor ability, nothing stares her in the face, harrows up her soul, or

* Judge not that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge shall ye be judged.

Christ's Sermon.

† *Nil conscire sibi nulla pallescere culpa.* Virg.

freezes her blood *. And although a husband exists whom she has here held up and laughed to scorn, she heartily laments the occasion. It is a work of compulsion ; and happy had it been for her if she had never known him ; but knowing him to her sorrow, as she hath done, she sincerely pities and forgives him. This, after all, is the least she can do for him, leaving it for the stings of conscience to punish him here for all his misdeeds to her, and for the Almighty to chasten him hereafter.

* Shakespeare.

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CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUSION.

MRS. WRIGHTEN, having thus attempted an apology for intruding on the public a sketch of her life and conduct, as a married woman, she assures every one whom it may concern, she had no vengeance to gratify. In the delineation of her case she has studied to be as general as possible, without descending to inferior minutiae below the dignity of biography. Every thing libellous she detests, and she hath opened no secrets unfit to be told, nor has she transcribed any slander whatever. She vouches for the

truth of what she has unfolded, and if it be provoking it is confined to herself. If any thing of a libel can be found in this pamphlet she is the author, and her husband, if provoked, is at liberty to prosecute her. It can excite his wrath against no other person, and let him indict her if he please. The traverse will be novel between man and wife, and she will plead to issue, not doubting but an honest jury of married men, who by a late admirable law can determine crime or no crime, will honourably acquit her. Mr. Ridgeway can be guilty of publishing only, which has been determined no crime, and as she was pregnant of her apology with which she went her due time, this industrious bookseller attended her in its delivery. He was her midwife, and her month being expired, she hath left her bantling with him to nurse, while she is
gone

gone to America in search of health, peace and competence.

Should it be asked why Mrs. Wrighten came forward at all, it is because her patience was exhausted. She has borne much, and she was desirous of undeceiving the public as much as possible. When a woman leaves her husband, a thousand presumptions may be raised against her, and it may well be believed it is not on the score of his goodness to her.

She fully acquits Mr. Pownal of every imputed guilt with her. Her faults whatever they are, and the best are not without them, are her own. She exculpates him, and she cannot but feel some uneasiness that a Gentleman to whom she owes much, should be pursued in two actions for what she takes wholly on herself. She may have given an appearance of guilt against him,
but

but never the reality, and she is in duty bound to exonerate him, who for his kindness to her, when given up by her husband, has become the object of his resentment. Whatever be the event of the suit, and she is almost certain it will fall dead born to the ground; be it for ever remembered that she brings Mr. Pownal in not guilty of any thing tortious by her. On the contrary, she calls out to the highest pitch of her voice, that his good behaviour to her sets the memory of her husband at an eternal distance.

Lord Kenyon would do well, and every other Judge, to relax his moral senses on the trial of a cause of this kind, and infuse into his adjudication a little philosophy. Let him enquire into the conduct of the man to his wife, and the conduct of him to whom she fled. He will then be able to discriminate the real boundaries of criminality and to feel
the

the weight of vice. If a husband make himself hateful; and accident carry an unhappy wife into the protection of another who treats her well; who is a stranger to him and did not seduce her, surely his lordship will lighten the name of the offence, and, remembering that Nature will prevail, never attempt to alter her by excessive damages.*

Those sober readers who may think Mrs. Wrighten wrong in thus defending her friend at the expence of her prompter, are informed with all due deference and regard, that she cannot be brought to think so herself. She is a woman, a compound being of flesh and spirit, neither a deity nor a devil, and nothing whereby a woman is affected can be indifferent to her. She has been affected in the extreme, and she believes she could be

* *Naturam expellas furca licet tamen usque recurrit.*

HOR.

only

only wrong in suffering her friend to be hanted and vilified without declaring in the face of the world that his only fault is kindly helping her up, when thrown down by her husband—in kindly seeing her to a place of safety when he had cast her away, and in kindly assisting her when he had left her to starve. It is not for this he sues him. It is not for *her* loss; but it is for damages, where none have been incurred.

To defend her friend, and justify herself are the ends of her apology, wherein if she hath spoken freely of marriage in general, and her own in particular, it is from the fullness of her heart and the test of experience. She has advanced nothing without the assignment of a reason, and when she touched on wedlock she meant not to speak in favour of vice. To throw off the moralist and assume the Philosopher is sometimes proper.

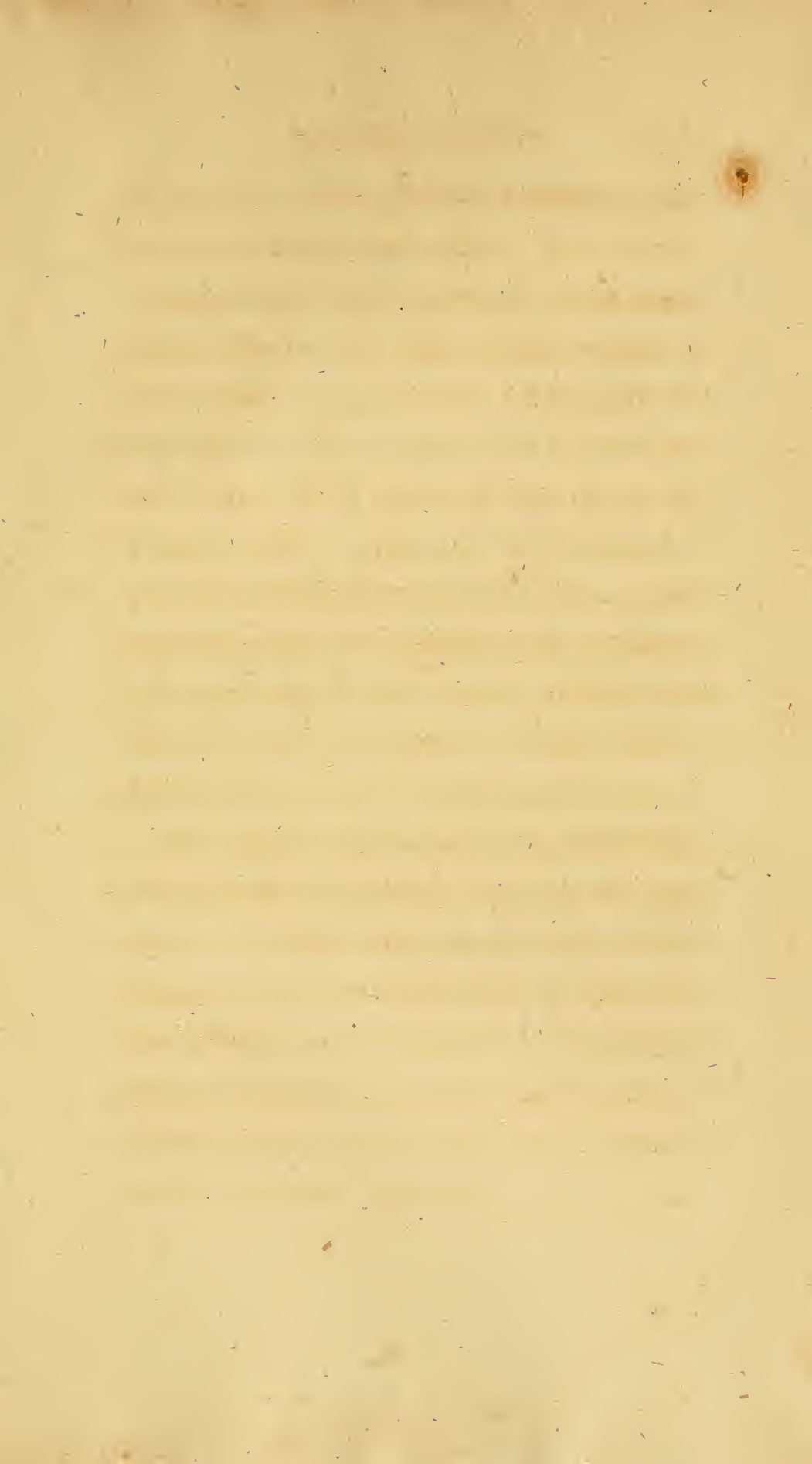
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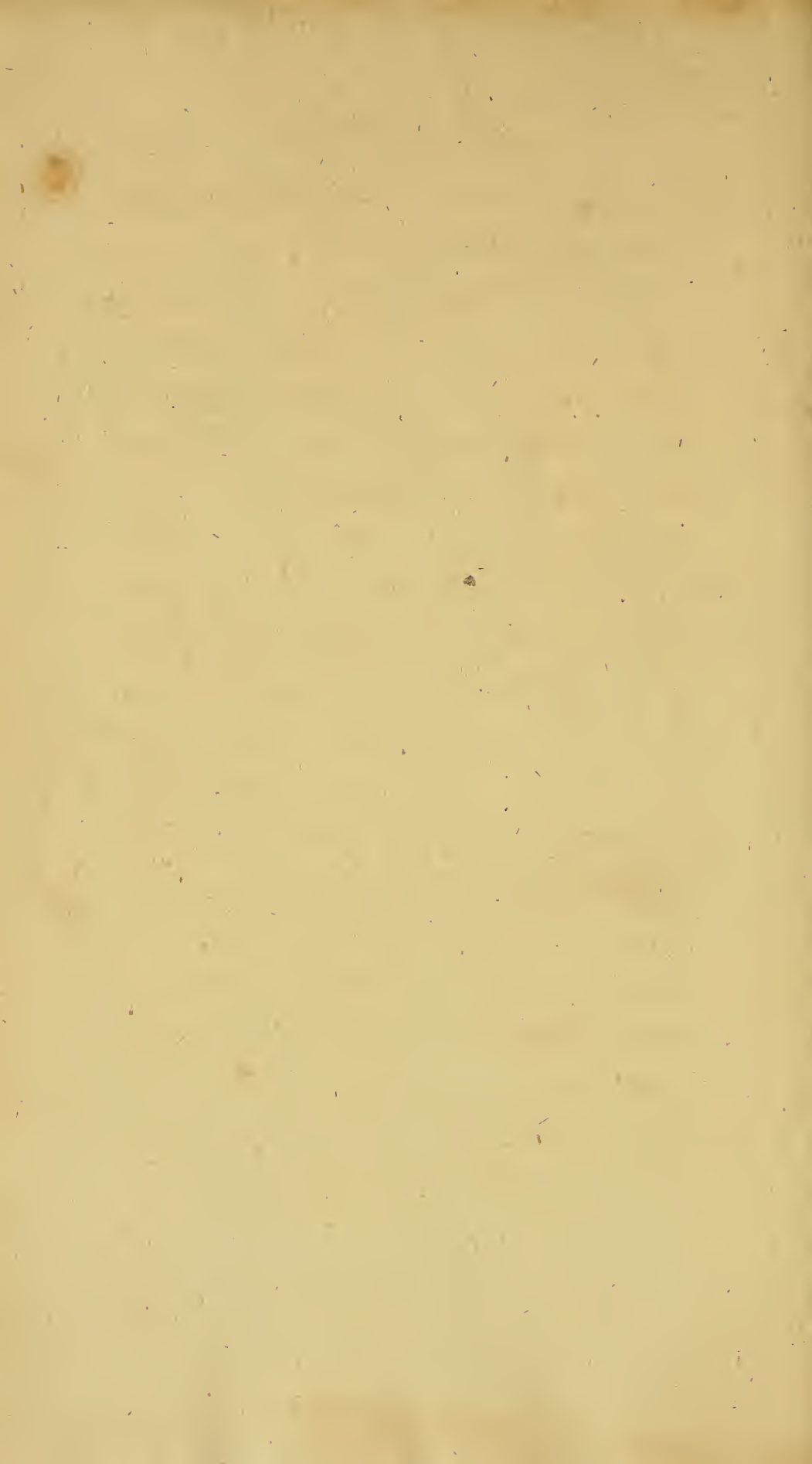
Prostitution is horrible, and wedded prostitutes are pitiable above all.

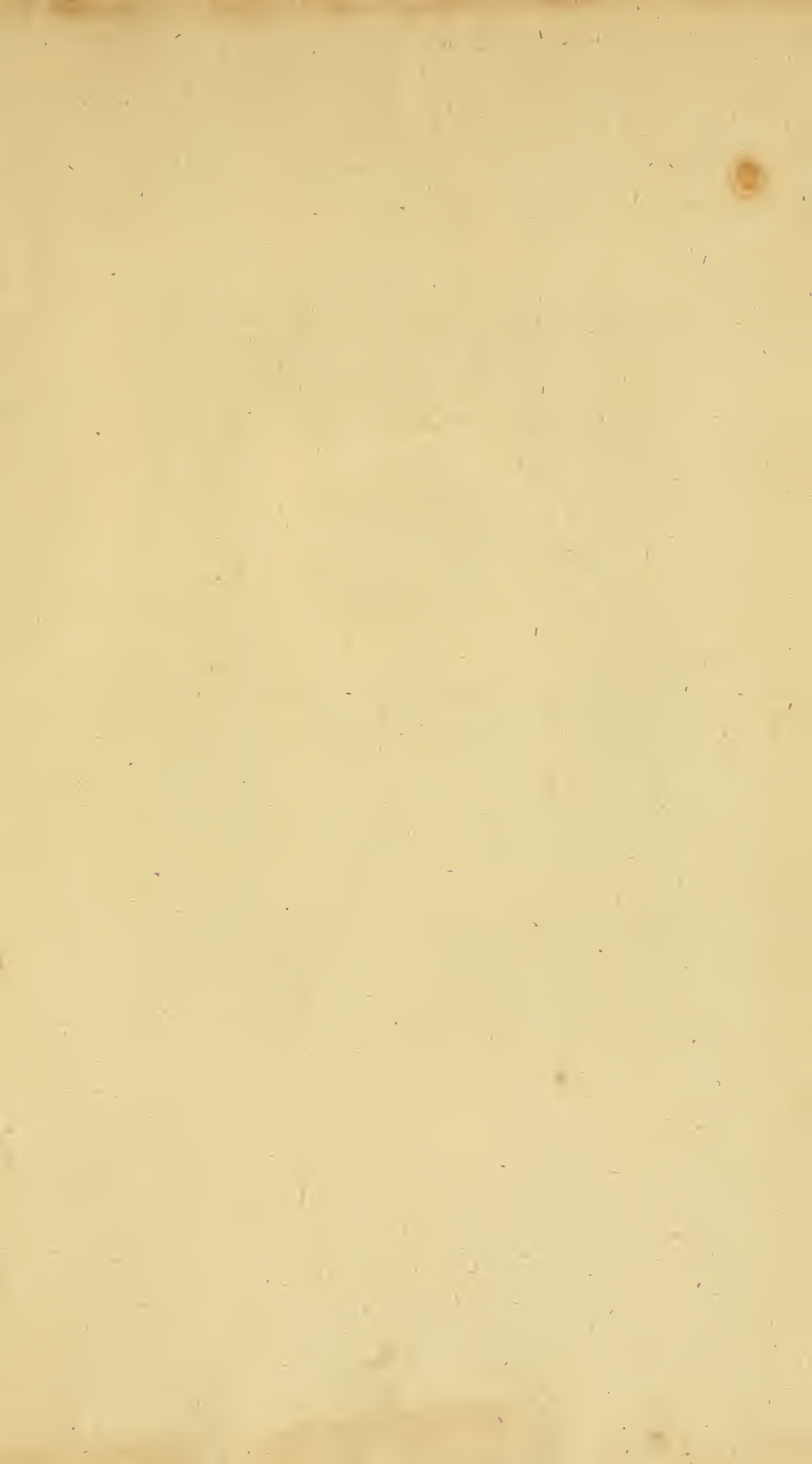
Mrs. Wrighten does not condemn marriages. She has only shown their consequences. She does not extol a conjugal state between the sexes, unwarranted by the laws of custom which may have the effects of a second nature. She has only looked at parties in both situations ; and in the one, she has found Love to have been mutually felt previous to their union, while in the other, it has appeared as a duty, but not otherwise impressed on their hearts.

In regard to herself she has endeavoured to be candid, artless, and explicit, and whatever may be thought by the men, the best friends in general to the fair, to the women she makes her best curtesy, taking the liberty to whisper in their ears, that if they had been in her situation they would have felt and acted as she hath done.

The first part of the history of the
 world is the history of the
 creation of the world. The
 second part is the history of
 the world from the beginning
 of the world to the present
 time. The third part is the
 history of the world from the
 present time to the end of
 the world. The fourth part
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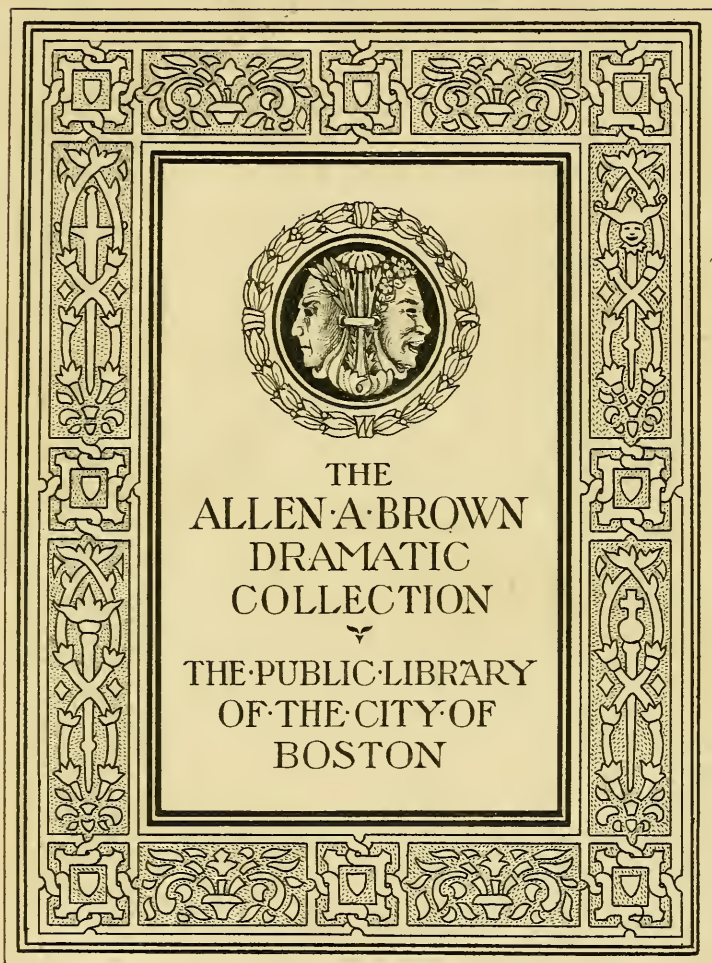








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